

Brighter Futures Child Development Center



Brighter Futures

Parent Handbook

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Addendums

This handbook is intended to familiarize families with the current Brighter Futures policy, practices, and standards. Print copies are available upon request. Brighter Futures reserves the right to revise its policies, practices and standards as deemed appropriate by the Director. Families will be notified of updates to the handbook

HISTORY

Brighter Future's Center is a newly established childcare Center that sets a high standard for providing exceptional care to children. With highly skilled and experienced owners and teachers, the Center is dedicated to offering a nurturing and stimulating environment for children to learn and grow.

MISSION STATEMENT

At Brighter Futures Child Development Center, we believe in the value and uniqueness of each child we serve. Our childcare experience is designed to promote each child's own individual social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development.

As caregivers and educators, our mission is to provide a safe and developmentally appropriate learning environment, which fosters a child's natural desire to explore, discover, create, and become a lifelong learner.

PHILOSOPHY

Our program is built around the concept that children are born ready to learn. As caregivers, we strive to create a learning environment that is safe, stimulating and encouraging. The following principles are excerpts from the South Carolina Early Learning Standards and serve as the foundation for our curriculum.

- Children develop knowledge of their world through active interactions with caregivers, peers, materials, and events.
- Learning is sequential, building on prior understandings and experiences.
- Learning proceeds at different rates in each area and each child; children will show a range of skills and understandings in any one area of development.
- Learning in each area is interconnected. Young children learn best through experiences, which incorporate several areas of development.
- Learning is embedded in a culture. Children learn best when their learning activities are rooted in a familiar cultural context.
- Learning begins in the family, continues in early care and education settings, and depends on parent involvement and caregiver guidance.

All children have the potential to achieve the South Carolina Learning Standards with appropriate support and instruction.

WELCOME

Welcome to Brighter Futures Child Development Center!

We believe the strongest partnership in a child's life is that between the child's parents and the Center in which their child attends. The goal that we strive to achieve is for our staff to team up with parents to make this experience an excellent one for your entire family. We are committed to providing the highest quality of care for your child and to your family.

We have an Open-Door Policy and want your involvement. We encourage you to get involved in the community, visit or volunteer in your child's classroom, chaperone field trips, and always be an advocate for your child.

We serve children between the ages of 3 years old and 5 years old. Our daily program promotes your child's intellectual, social, physical, and emotional development. We individualize our program to meet the needs of each child.

We continually train our staff using the most current research in child development and early education. The beginning of enrollment is an important time and please know that we are available to answer any questions that may come up.

It is our hope that you and your child will develop a lifetime of wonderful memories while enrolled in our program.

DISCRIMINATION, CONFIDENTIALITY & INCLUSION

DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Brighter Futures prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or income bias.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Unless we receive your written consent, information regarding your child will not be released, with the exception of that required by our regulatory and partnering agencies. All records concerning children at our program are confidential.

EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN (SPECIAL NEEDS) POLICY

Brighter Futures is committed to meeting the needs of all children. This includes children with special health care needs such as asthma and allergies, as well as children with emotional and behavioral issues or chronic illness or disability. Inclusion of children with special needs enriches the childcare experience and all staff, families, and children benefit.

1. Confidentiality is assured with all families and staff in our program. All families will be treated with dignity and with respect for their individual needs and' or differences.
2. Children with disabilities will be accepted into our program under the guidelines of the ADA.
3. Children with special needs will be given the opportunity to participate in the program to the fullest extent possible. To accomplish this, we may consult with agencies/ organizations as needed.
4. An individual plan of care is developed for each child with a special health care need by communication with the teachers, parents and specialists. The plan of care includes information and instructions for daily care, potential emergency situations, and care during and after disaster. This plan is reviewed annually or when there are changes made to the plan. IFSP/IEP are welcomed and a part of the process if requested.
5. The Center will partner with an organization(s) to help our children: Tri-County Therapy, PEAR, etc... All licensed therapists are welcome in the center to work with children and must have a Authorization For Intervention, Therapy And Extracurricular Activities (DSS Form 2930) on file with the center.
6. All staff will receive general training on working with children with special needs, individual plans, and given updated training on specific special needs that are encountered in the classroom.
7. Teachers, cooks, and other staff will be oriented to any special needs or dietary restrictions by the Director.
8. We will make every reasonable accommodation to encourage full and active participation of all children in our program based on their individual capabilities and needs that does not put undo financial stress on the center.

GENERAL CENTER INFORMATION

ADMINISTRATION:

Chief Executive Officer/Owner: Dr. Harold T. Marshall smarshall@bfcddc.com

Director: Dorothy Marshall dnmarshall@bfcddc.com

LICENSING

Brighter Futures is a public program voluntarily licensed to serve 68 children by the South Carolina Department of Human Services. A copy of the licensing rules is available for review in the office, the staff break room, and on the web [Licensing Requirements - SC Child Care Services](#).

Brighter Futures CENTER is a participant in the South Carolina ABC Quality Rating Scale.

HOURS OF OPERATION

Brighter Futures is open Monday through Friday from 6:30 am to 6:00 pm The Center is closed for the following holidays:

New Year's Day	Independence Day
Martin Luther King Jr. Day	Labor Day
Memorial Day	Veteran's Day
Juneteenth	Thanksgiving
Christmas	

Additionally, Brighter Futures will be closed 5 days per year for staff development days. These dates will be announced in advance and will typically coincide with a holiday.

PROGRAMS PER CLASSROOM

There are 4 childcare programs offered at Brighter Futures. They are:

- | | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| • Exploratory Eagles | 3 years to 4 years | 12 to 14 children |
| • Dynamic Discovers | 3 years to 4 years | 12 to 14 children |
| • Marvelous Minds | 4 years to 5 years | 12 to 20 children |
| • Global Go-Getters | 5 years to 6 years | 12 to 20 children |

LICENSING RATIOS

At Brighter Futures CENTER, we follow the state regulations staff-to-child ratios for our classrooms:

Age of Children	Minimum Ratio of Staff to Children
3 to 4 years	1 staff for every 12 children
4 to 5 years	1 staff for every 17 children
5 to 6 years	1 staff for every 20 children

South Carolina Department of Social Services regulation pertaining to mix age groups: "When there are mixed age groups in the same room, the staff/child ratio shall be consistent with the age of the majority of the children when no infants or toddlers are in the mixed age group."

However, Brighter Futures strive to have teachers and teacher assistants to ensure our children receive the best possible care.

FEES AND BILLING

FINANCIAL AGREEMENT AND TUITION INCREASE

WEEKLY FEE: (ALL FEES ARE NON-REFUNDABLE)

- 3 Yrs. and up \$225.00 / wk. + 4% Processing fee if debit or credit
 - \$213.75 / wk. + 4% Processing fee if debit or credit
- After School \$175 / wk. + 4% Processing fee if debit or credit
- ABC Clients \$Co-Pay + 5% Processing fee if debit or credit
- Late Payment Fees: \$50 per day Return Payment Fees: \$50
- There is a \$100.00 non-refundable registration fee

Upon enrollment and any changes to tuition, families are provided with a Fee Policy & Financial Agreement. This agreement should be carefully reviewed, checked for errors. Effective every January 1, a rate increase of 3% will be applied each year on all tuition rates. New rates will take effect at the beginning of the fiscal year.

AUTOMATIC PAYMENTS

All enrollments must make childcare payments electronically with a checking or savings account. A Direct Debit Authorization form must be completed and returned with a voided check before or on a child's first day at the Center. Special arrangements must be discussed and made with the Director if a parent prefers to make automatic credit or debit card payments. Payments made with a credit or debit card will be charged a 5% processing fee. **Cash is never accepted.** Payments are automatically withdrawn on Monday at 12:00 noon for the upcoming week of care. If a holiday falls on a Monday, payments will be withdrawn from your checking, savings account debit or credit card on the next business day.

PART-TIME ENROLLMENT

Brighter Futures Center does not offer a part-time enrollment rate. A parent can pick up their child as early as desired but will still pay the full-time rate.

MULTIPLE CHILD DISCOUNT

Families with two or more children enrolled full-time at Brighter Futures are eligible for a 5% discount to be applied to the second child's weekly tuition fee.

LATE PICK-UP FEE

Brighter Futures closes at 6:00 PM, Monday through Friday. Late arrival to pick up your child will have an added fee if you arrive after the Center closes. From 6:01 p.m.-6:15 p.m. \$35.00 and \$25.00 every 15 minutes after 6:15 p.m. Teachers will record late fees for processing. If there is a late

pick-up fee, parents will receive a written notice from the Director stating the amount of the late pick-up fee. The fee will be added to your payment the following week. If three instances of late pick-up occur, enrollment will be under review and may potentially be cancelled.

RETURNED PAYMENTS/INSUFFICIENT FUNDS

All returned payments rejected due to insufficient funds will be charged a \$50.00 penalty. Missed payments and late fees must be paid by the Friday of the same week. Repeated incidents of returned checks or insufficient funds notices could result in termination of childcare services. A payment plan should be discussed with the Director if a family is having trouble making tuition payments.

DELINQUENT ACCOUNTS

Families that are more than 1 week or \$225 behind in payments will have their childcare services terminated. For information about assistance programs that will help cover the cost of childcare tuition, please speak with the Director. A payment plan must be agreed upon between family and Center before an account will be considered “in good standing” and no longer eligible for termination.

SUMMER TUITION POLICY

All children enrolled will be charged the current full-time rate each week during the summer months. A Summer Activities” fee of \$250 will be charged on June 1st every year for extracurricular activities which are only offered during the summer: water sports, KIDZ Summer Olympics, etc. Field trip fees will be assessed with weekly tuition fees; if a child does not attend a scheduled field trip, the fee for that field trip will not be charged with a two day advance notice.

MEALS AND SNACKS

At Brighter Futures Center, children are provided a nutritious breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snack. Brighter Futures follows the nutritional guidelines established by the Child and Adult Care Food Program. Menus will be posted on the bulletin board near the main entrance. You may request a copy to take home if you would like.

Children will be encouraged to sample all the foods that are offered but will never be forced to eat. Please inform your child’s teacher if your child cannot eat a certain food or has different dietary needs (e.g., vegetarian, vegan, lactose intolerant) so a substitution can be made. We must have a doctor’s note on file for food allergies. For certain dietary restrictions, you may be asked to provide food from home for your child.

- Breakfast is served between 7:00 a.m. and 7:50 a.m.
- Lunch is served between 11:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m.
- PM Snack is served between 2:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m.
- Late snacks (if given) are served between 5:00 pm to 6:00 pm.

FOOD POLICY

All meals are enjoyed in family style, with the children and teachers sitting at tables to promote good manners, eating habits, and socialization skills.

The following is a guideline to help assist you in planning a healthy lunch for your child. These patterns are from the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program. You may access the complete USDA CACFP meal pattern packet.

The Center does not permit children to share or exchange food items.

For the safety of your child, parents are required to provide notification, in the form of a doctor's note, of any allergies (food or otherwise), with instructions for treatment should a child have an allergic reaction. Please refer to the Health and Safety Policies contained herein for further information. The center does not conduct fundraising with or without non-food items.

Parents are required to provide written notification of any food/dietary restrictions (i.e. lactose intolerance, vegetarian diets, wheat free/gluten free diets).

The Child Development Center never uses food as a punishment. Children will never be denied participation in lunch or snack time for behavioral reasons.

Food can be used by teachers for classroom lessons.

MALNUTRITION POLICY

At Brighter Futures Child Development Center, we are committed to the health and well-being of every child in our care. Proper nutrition is essential for growth, development, and overall well-being. This policy outlines our approach to preventing, identifying, and addressing malnutrition in children.

1. Prevention

- We provide balanced, nutritious meals and snacks that meet USDA Child Care Food Program guidelines.
- Menus are planned to include a variety of fresh fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and protein sources.
- Mealtime practices encourage children to develop healthy eating habits.

2. Identification

- Staff will observe children for signs of malnutrition, including but not limited to:
 - Sudden weight loss or failure to gain weight
 - Fatigue, weakness, or frequent illness
 - Poor concentration or developmental delays
- Parents will be informed of any concerns regarding their child's nutritional health.

3. Intervention

- If malnutrition is suspected, staff will document observations and discuss concerns with parents/guardians.
- We will provide resources and referrals to local nutrition programs or healthcare providers as needed.
- In cases of severe malnutrition or neglect, we will follow mandated reporting procedures to protect the child's welfare.

4. Parent Partnership

- Parents are encouraged to communicate any dietary restrictions, allergies, or concerns.
- Nutrition education and resources will be made available to families upon request.

By working together, we can ensure that every child at Brighter Futures receives the nutrition they need to thrive. **The Center does not conduct fundraising events.**

PEANUT/NUT FREE CLASSROOMS

Due to the extreme nature of some allergic reactions to peanuts/nuts and products containing peanuts and/or nuts in some children, The Center is peanut/nut free. The teacher will notify you of any other allergies in the classroom. Per our Confidentiality Policy, only the allergen will be identified, not the child.

Parents of children in an allergen aware classroom are responsible for providing foods that are free of the identified allergen for their child's lunch. The important thing to remember is to read the label of every food item you send to school with your child. Many foods which we do not think containing peanuts or nuts have in fact been made in the same factories as peanut/nut containing foods and are therefore considered to be contaminated. When reading the label look at not only the ingredients listed, but for statements such as, "may contain traces of peanuts." For example, Plain Chocolate M & M's have this statement on the label.

FOOD ALLERGIES

Based on the needs of the children at each Center, the facility is peanut/egg free. No food containing, or processed in a facility with peanuts/eggs, are allowed in the Center. Children are welcome to bring in special treats to celebrate a birthday or holiday. Due to various food allergies and dietary restrictions in our classrooms, we recommend supplying store-bought snacks still in the original packaging. A list of healthy snack options approved by USDA Food Program the is available from the Director.

FOOD ALLERGY ACTION PLAN

If your child has a food allergy, please complete a Food Allergy Action Plan form, available in the office. This form will be posted in your children's room, as well as in food preparation areas. If medication for an allergic reaction is provided, please have your physician sign the Food Allergy Action Plan as well.

ENROLLMENT, WITHDRAWAL AND GENERAL POLICIES

ENROLLMENT

Initial enrollment is contingent upon receipt of the completed enrollment application, signed fee agreement, registration fee, deposit, immunization records and signed Parent Handbook receipt. Before new students start, teachers will give families a welcome packet of classroom specific information and suggestions. The packet will also include a family questionnaire to learn about your child's interests, your family's approaches to learning, your child's developmental needs, and your concerns and goals for your child. The teachers will incorporate this information into ongoing classroom planning.

UPDATING ENROLLMENT RECORDS

Each January, Brighter Futures completes an audit of enrollment records. At the conclusion of this audit, families will be notified if anything need to be updated. Some forms must be updated every year, including the Emergency Contact and Medical Consent form. Most forms may be completed electronically; if you wish to receive a PDF version of the enrollment forms, please provide your email address to the Director.

Other records must be updated throughout the year, such as physical and immunization records. When visiting your child's physician for a yearly "well-child" appointment, please request a copy of your child's physical and most recent immunization record. You may bring these items in yourself or have your physician mail them to the Center.

In addition, any time a family's information changes such as address, place of employment or health insurance provider, a new Emergency Contact and Medical Consent form must be completed.

DISMISSAL

Every effort will be made to resolve differences. However, circumstances that can result in a child /family's dismissal from the Center immediately, include, but are not limited to:

Behavior aspects of a child:

- Any child who is not yet ready for the group experience or whose needs cannot be met in a group setting (i.e.-cannot get along with other children, unable to follow class rules and teacher instructions, requires one-on-one attention from the teacher for a majority of the day),
- A child who continually places the safety of him/herself, other children, or staff members at risk.
- A child with behavior problems so severe that they cannot be accommodated within the scope of the regular program and regular staff-child ratio, or lack of a written plan or instructions from a psychiatrist, psychologist, counselor, or therapist specializing in young children.

Parental disregard for Center policy:

- Tuition is 5 days overdue and there is not a written plan for payment of back tuition,
- Failure to pay the tuition according to the written plan,
- Consistent disregard for the hours of operation,
- Failure to treat the Center staff and children with respect.

The Center reserves the right to dismiss any child at any time if the Owner deems it necessary. Although families can be dismissed immediately, when possible, the Center endeavors to follow the procedure below:

- Parents will be notified of the issue by the teacher or office staff as soon as possible.
- Parents and teachers or office staff will set up a conference for discussion of the problem within 48 hours.
- A follow-up conference will be scheduled for 2 weeks later.
- If significant improvement is not observed, parents will be asked to seek outside assistance to aid in a solution.
- After a reasonable time, if a solution cannot be reached, the Owner may communicate dismissal.

Any past due balances must be paid at the time of the dismissal. An invoice detailing the past due balance will be forwarded to the address indicated in the children's file within one week of the dismissal. Any balances remaining after the 30-day period will be referred to the agency's legal counsel for collection.

Ultimately, continued enrollment will be at the sole discretion of the Owner. A parent who wishes to appeal a dismissal from the Center may do so by arranging a meeting with the Board of Directors at which the lead teacher and Executive Director will outline attempted modifications and discuss their effectiveness. The parents may request further or alternative modifications.

However, the Board will not overturn the decision of the Owner unless it is shown that he/she has acted in a biased or unprofessional manner during the dismissal process.

The Center Director or designee will assist the parents in gathering their child's belongings at the time of dismissal and parents are required to leave Center property in a calm and respectful manner, immediately. The Center will request assistance from local police should any parent become disruptive and/or uncooperative while gathering their child's belongings upon dismissal.

A dismissed child and his/her parents are required to call and request an appointment with the Director if they wish to return to Center property following a dismissal. Appointments are made at the discretion of the Owner and are not a right of the dismissed child or parent.

Following a dismissal, any parent or child who harasses, threatens or in any manner causes harm to anyone affiliated with Brighter Futures by calling, writing, or any other means, will be fully prosecuted of the law, by the Center.

WITHDRAWAL

One month's written notice via the Withdrawal Notice Form, as of the end of a month, is required when withdrawing a child for any reason.

The parents and child, following their last day of enrollment, are not permitted to re-enter Center property without prior permission of the Director. A withdrawn child and his/her parents are required to call and request an appointment with the Director if they wish to return to Center property following the last day of enrollment. Appointments are made at the discretion of the Director and are not the right of the withdrawn child or parent.

WAITING LIST

Classes at The Center typically remain full throughout the year. The Center keeps waiting lists, divided by age and program. A waiting list application form as well as a non-refundable application fee must be attached and submitted to the office to place a child on the waiting list. Applications will be filed in each age category according to the date the application form and fee are received. Once enrolled, the application fee applies to the child's first annual registration fee.

The following waiting list policies apply to all families:

1. The first time a family declines a spot (or fails to call back)- the waiting list date will be changed to the date of decline.
2. The second time a family declines (or fails to call back)- the child will be removed from the waiting list. Any family wishing to get back on the waiting list must submit a new application and fee.
3. Children are considered for admission based on the following priorities:
 - 1st : Current students (inhouse next level classroom)
 - 2nd : Siblings of current students
 - 3rd : Date of Application and paid registration fee for all others

EMERGENCY CONTACT & AUTHORIZED PICK-UP PEOPLE

At enrollment, parents will be required to include all persons who, in the course of events, may at one time be asked to pick-up their child from the Center. In an emergency, the child's parents will be called first. If they cannot be reached, staff will call the emergency contact and one authorized pick-up person. State regulations require each family to have at least one emergency contact (other than a parent) and one authorized pick-up person.

Should the staff contact a parent, and the parent is unable to pick up the child, it is then the responsibility of the parent to arrange for their child to be picked up by someone on the list. Failure of the parents to make such arrangements will result in dismissal from the program.

Parents cannot be listed as an emergency contact or authorized pick-up person. The nature of the parental relationship affords the parents (in the absence of a court order indicating otherwise) the right to pick up their child.

The people listed under the admission information will be required to provide a government issued photo ID prior to the Center releasing the child. **There will be no exceptions to this rule.**

All changes and/or additions to the admission information must be made in writing and dated and signed. Only custodial parents have the right to make changes or additions to this form. The Center reserves the right to refuse/ban any person listed on the Enrollment form for any reason, including but not limited to violations of the policies/procedures contained herein. It is the responsibility of the enrolling parent(s) to inform each person on the Enrollment form of the policies/procedures contained herein.

Parents will be asked to determine which persons (if any) on the Emergency/Alternate Pick-up form have the right to act “In Loco Parentis.” In Loco Parentis status affords the pick-up person the right to discuss confidential information about the child’s day including, but not limited to, incident/accident reports, and behavior issues. In the absence of this designation the people on the Emergency/Alternate Pick-Up Form are only afforded the right to pick up the child. Staff are not permitted to discuss the child’s day with them.

WEATHER-RELATED CLOSINGS

Brighter Futures will remain open during most severe weather. The Director will monitor the weather and local news stations to determine when it is appropriate to close the Center early or cancel care for the following day.

If Brighter Futures closes early or cancels care for the following day, parents will be contacted and informed of the situation. Children should be picked up in a reasonable amount of time to ensure all parents, children, and staff can travel safely home. Families will still be charged during weather closings.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality is a top priority for Brighter Futures Personal information of families and staff will not be shared for any reason without prior written consent of the individual, except for our licensing agencies, Department of Social Services (DSS). When discussing a child’s activities and friends in the classroom, only first names will be used. In situations regarding behavior

problems and/or Incident/Accident Reports, names of children involved will never be given to families.

VIOLATIONS OF THE CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

The Center takes very seriously the responsibility of maintaining the confidentiality of all persons associated with the CENTER. Parents need to recognize that the Confidentiality Policy not only applies to their child or family, but all children, families, and employees associated with the Center.

Any parent who shares any information considered to be confidential pressures employees or other parents for information, which is not necessary for them to know, will be in violation of the Confidentiality Policy and could be dismissed from the Center.

Any parent who violates the Confidentiality Policy and is dismissed will not be permitted on CENTER property thereafter. Refer to the policy regarding Parents Right to Immediate Access for additional information regarding dis-enrollment of a child when a parent is prohibited from accessing Center property.

SOCIAL MEDIA

This social media policy applies to parents, employees, students, and The Board of Directors of The Center. This policy includes (but is not limited to) the following technologies:

- Social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, Snap Chat, Instagram)
- Blogs
- Discussion forums
- Collaborative online spaces
- Media Sharing services (i.e. You Tube)
- Micro-blogging (i.e. Twitter)

As part of our duty to safeguard children it is essential to maintain the privacy and security of all our families and employees. We therefore require that:

- No photographs taken within the CENTER setting or at special events and outings with the children, are to be posted for public viewing, except those of your own child.
- Parents are advised that they do not have a right to photograph anyone else's child or to upload photos of anyone else's children. (This excludes those photographs taken by staff for the children's online learning journal, which are sometimes used for display in the setting, for use on the Center website and in other advertising material if parental permission is given).
- No public discussions are to be held, or comments made on social media sites regarding the Center, children, staff or Administrators (except appropriate use for marketing fundraising events) or that could be construed to have any impact on the Center's reputation or that would offend any member of staff or parent using the Center.

- If a parent names the Center on any social media platform, they must do so in a way that is not detrimental or derogatory to the Center.
- Parents are not permitted to set up private or public social media (i.e. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter) accounts/groups related to Brighter Futures Child Development Center.

VIOLATION OF SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Any parent found to be in violation of the above or by posting remarks or comments that breach confidentiality, bring the Center into disrepute or that are deemed to be of a detrimental nature to the Center, its employees, or other children, could result in immediate dismissal from the Center.

COURT ORDERS AFFECTING ENROLLED CHILDREN

In cases where an enrolled child is the subject of a court order (ex... Custody Order, Restraining Order, or Protection from Abuse Order) The Center must be provided with a Certified Copy of the most recent order and all amendments thereto. The court orders will be strictly followed unless the custodial parent(s) requests a more liberal variation of the order in writing.

In the case where both parents are afforded shared/joint custody by order of the court, both parents must sign the request for more liberal interpretation of the order. In the absence of a court order on file with The Center administration, both parents shall be afforded equal access to their child as stipulated by law. The Center cannot, without a court order, limit the access of one parent by the request of the other parent, regardless of the reason.

If a situation presents itself, where one parent does not want the other parent to have access to their child, The Center suggests that the parent keep the child with them until a court order is issued. If conflicting court orders are presented, the most recently dated court order will be followed.

Once presented with a Protection from Abuse Order or a Restraining Order, The Center is obligated to follow the order for the entire period it is in effect. Employees of The Center cannot, at the request of anyone, except the issuing judge, allow a Protection from Abuse Order and/or a Restraining Order to be violated. The Center will report any violations of these orders to the court.

PEST CONTROL

Brighter Futures goal is to prevent pest problems whenever possible. This is done through monitoring, regular inspections, high standards of sanitation and pest proof measures, and modification of environmental conditions leading to pest problems. The Center is contracted with Terminix Pest Control for routine care. No harmful chemicals are used that will endanger the children and the children are not present during Terminix's visits

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

ARRIVAL

During hours of operation, parents have unlimited access to their children. Upon arrival at The Center, the parents or the adult dropping the child off must sign the child into Center on the electronic tablet located outside the classroom doors. For the safety of all children, we have secure doors. Only people who are authorized can enter the building while children are present. When families enroll, they will receive personalized pin numbers. Each family's pin opens doors during the Center's opening hours. Please do not hold the door open for unauthorized individuals. In addition, if you have forgotten your pin number, do not follow another family in, but instead press the button to buzz the office. These procedures are designed to protect the welfare and best interests of the employees, children, and families of the Center.

Be alert and immediately report any breaches or concerns to the office.

Children are required to be escorted by their parents or the adult dropping them off, to their designated classroom. Children are required by law to be always supervised while in Center. Parents are required to help children put away their personal belongings and get settled for the day. The Center does not allow idling vehicles to be left in the parking lot. Parents are also required not to leave a sibling or other child in the car unattended while they drop off their child.

Parents should also speak with the teacher in the classroom, if only briefly. We encourage parents to communicate with their child's teacher, about their child's temperament that day, how he/she slept the night before, whether he/she has eaten that morning, etc.

Upon arrival, parents are required to follow the Medication Policy if a child must receive medication during the course of the day.

Most children go through periods of difficulty separating from their parents(s). This is common and developmentally appropriate. Try these tips for a successful drop-off:

- Establish a regular, predictable routine. Whether you have a kiss and a hug and go, or help your child put his/her things in his cubby first, do it the same way every day. What often makes separating stressful for children is uncertainty. If your child can predict what will happen, separation won't be as difficult.
- Separate once. If you come back into the classroom again and again, it will increase your child's stress. Remember the moment of separation is the worst part for your child, so doing it more than once makes it more stressful for your child.
- Be reliable. Return when promised. Children who are picked up later than expected may have more difficulties separating. Phrase time in terms your child will understand. For example, you will be back after snack time or before nap time.

DEPARTURE

Brighter Futures closes at 6:00pm Monday through Friday. Parents or other authorized adults are required to sign their child out of care on the electronic tablet located outside the classroom doors. Once a parent signs their child out, the parent is then solely responsible for supervising their child while on the CDC's premises. The parent may not allow a child to wander through the hallways, bathrooms, other classrooms and/or playground. Parents are required to handle all business issues prior to signing out their child and are required to exit the building once they have signed their child out of care to prevent "parent traffic jams" or long conversations which takes the teachers focus away from the children. The classroom teacher will be able to briefly discuss your child's day with you or another authorized adult at pick-up. However, should you feel it necessary to have an in-depth discussion or meeting, it is most appropriate to schedule the meeting for a later date because the teacher is responsible for supervising the remaining children in the classroom. A telephone conference may be scheduled for later in the day or for the next day at nap/rest time if the parent(s) is unable to meet at the center during the course of the day. If you are late picking up your child, please provide us with as much notice as possible.

Please note that there is a late fee for arriving after 6:00pm. If someone we are not familiar with is to pick up your child, it is essential that you inform your child's teacher in advance of the pick-up. This person must be listed as an authorized person on the Emergency Contact and Parent Consent form. Remind the authorized person that they may be asked for identification such as a driver's license to ensure your child's safety. Even if the individual has picked up before, he or she may still need identification if the teacher in charge has never met him or her.

Be sure to say good-bye to your child's teachers so they know you are leaving. Once you have reunited with your child and are departing, Brighter Futures is no longer responsible for your child. For safety reasons, please do not let your child run ahead of you inside or outside of the building.

If parents do not arrive to pick up their child from the program, staff members will first try to contact the parents using all phone numbers provided on the Emergency Contact and Medical Consent form. If parents are unable to be reached, staff members will try to contact all emergency contact persons. If staff members are unable to contact emergency contact persons by 6:30 pm, the Director will then notify the Department of Human Services and/or the local police department.

PERSONS APPEARING TO BE IMPAIRED BY DRUGS AND/OR ALCOHOL

The staff of the Center will contact local police and/or the other custodial parent should a parent appear to the staff of the Center to be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol. The parent's right to immediate access does not permit the Center staff from denying a custodial parent access to their child even if the parent is or appears to be impaired. However, the Center staff will delay

the impaired parent as long as possible, while contacting the other parent, the local police, and Child Protective Services.

Any other authorized person who attempts to pick-up a child and appears to the staff to be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol will be denied access to the child. The staff will contact the child's parents, local police, and Child Protective Services to notify them of the situation.

PARKING

Parking is in the front of the building only, not under the overhanging front patio. Please do not park behind other parents during arrival and departure. This is for the safety of our kids and avoids traffic jams in front of the Center. Please make your pick-ups and drop-offs brief, we have limited parking space. The Center does not allow idling vehicles be left in the parking lot. Parents are also required to not leave a sibling or other child in the car unattended while they drop off their child.

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is strongly encouraged for the benefit of the child as well as the classroom. Cut off time for dropping off your child is 8:30 am, unless there is a reason like a doctor's appointment. If your child will be absent or you are running late, please call the Center by 8:00 am so your child's teacher may make accommodations to the lesson plan.

If your child will be absent for an extended period of time (more than 2-3 days), the Center must be notified in writing of the date the absence begins and the expected date your child will return. Enrollment will be terminated if a child is absent for a period of 2 weeks or more, and no notice has been received or contact made by the family.

CENTER'S RIGHT TO REFUSE ADMISSION

The Center reserves the right to refuse admission to any child at any time with or without cause. Possible reasons for the refusal of admission include but are not limited to:

1. Lack of staff to maintain appropriate Staff to Child Ratios as determined by State Licensing Regulations.
2. The need to maintain compliance with Licensing Regulations.
3. Staff deems the child too ill to attend.
4. Domestic Situations that present a safety risk to the child, staff or other children enrolled at the Center if the child were to be present at the Center.
5. Parents' failure to maintain accurate, up to date records.
6. Parents' failure to complete and return required documentation in a timely fashion.
7. Parents' failure to follow the tuition policy.

Parents will not be reimbursed tuition for days when their child is refused admission to the program.

HOME AND CENTER PARTNERSHIP

TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

Brighter Futures strive to always have qualified staff taking care of our children. From time to time, the Center may need to quickly hire a teacher who may not have taught for a long time or are new to early childhood which is considered as a provisional hire. Provisional hires are never left alone with the children until their necessary background checks are completed, as well as the mandated training and time of 30 days with a lead teacher.

“The SC Child Care Licensing Law, Section 63-13-40 D(1) et seq., Code of Laws states that in order to be employed by or to provide caregiver services at a childcare facility licensed, registered, or approved under this sub-article, a Central Registry check must be conducted by DSS to determine any abuse or neglect perpetrated by the person upon a child. However, as stated in Section 63-13-40 D(2), Code of Laws, a person may be provisionally employed or may provisionally provide caregiver services before the Central Registry check is completed if the person executes a sworn statement on a form provided by DSS that he or she is not on the Central Registry for having perpetrated abuse or neglect upon a child.”

TRACKING & DAILY SHEETS

At Brighter Futures, children are tracked from the moment they arrive at the Center to the moment they leave the center into their parent or guardian's care. Upon arrival and departure, parents sign their child in/out through the computer portal or the paper sign in sheet in the classroom. The teacher will ensure the child is signed in and out of the classroom for the following: child's arrival, to and from the playground, from classroom to classroom and child's departure. See Field Trip policy to tracking on trips.

Brighter Futures uses ProCare Software. Daily information will be added as needed, i.e., meals, art, lesson plans. Since the children are of verbal age, we encourage parents to inquire about their child's day to encourage language and social emotional development.

ROOM TRANSITIONS

Your child will transition to a new classroom when he/she has reached the developmental milestones for a particular classroom. As the time for a transition to a new room approach, you will receive a letter containing information about your child's transition into his/her new classroom. Both your child's current and future teacher is available to address any questions or concerns you have during the transition process. Before the transition into a new classroom has been completed, parents are encouraged to schedule a meeting with the new teacher to familiarize themselves with the new classroom, children, and curriculum.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

Parent participation is strongly encouraged in our program. Some possible opportunities to participate and contribute to your child's Brighter Futures experience:

- Field trip transportation and supervision
- Leading or assisting special projects (sewing, carpentry, cooking, etc.)
- Construction or collection of raw materials for art projects, dramatic play props, etc.
- Eating lunch or snack with your child – please inform the teachers one day in advance.
- Volunteering in your child's classroom

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent-teacher conferences will typically be held each time your child transitions to classrooms and two times per year for our Center programs. The goal of the parent-teacher conference is to gain insight into your child's development both in the Center setting as well as the home setting. During conferences, your child's development and any goals you may have for your child will be discussed. Parents are encouraged to request conferences whenever they feel it necessary.

PROGRAM EVALUATIONS

Brighter Futures asks parents to complete a program evaluation annually. The information gathered from these anonymous surveys is used by the staff to develop goals for our Center and to improve the overall quality of care at our Center. A parent's point-of-view is different from a teacher's point-of-view. Therefore, parent feedback on the program evaluations is very important to the success of our program and satisfaction of our families.

HOLIDAYS AND VACATIONS

PAID HOLIDAYS

Brighter Futures will be closed in observance of the following holidays:

New Year's Day	Independence Day
Martin Luther King Jr. Day	Labor Day
Memorial Day	Veteran's Day
Juneteenth	Thanksgiving
Christmas	

Payments are still due and there are no pro-rated fees for holidays. If the holiday falls on a weekend day, Brighter Futures will close during the week. For example, if New Year's Day falls on a Saturday, Brighter Futures may close on Friday or Monday. Families will be given ample notice in the event of additional closing.

VACATION

Parents are given two weeks of vacation per year. A two-week notice must be given to the Director in writing. The vacation fee is ½ of your regular fees. Two weeks a year is the only

time there is a difference in fee. Vacation must be taken in a week format (5 consecutive business days) and not broken into mini days.

PAID STAFF DEVELOPMENT DAYS

Brighter Futures will be closed five days each calendar year for our staff to meet for 15 hours to participate in training and to enhance the mental and physical support of our team members. These days will be announced in advance and will typically be scheduled on or near a holiday to limit disruption to families.

EXTENDED ABSENCES

In the event that a child needs to take an extended absence, such as a summer break or maternity leave, and wishes to return to the program after a period of time, a fee of 50% of the weekly tuition must be paid each week the child is not present. More than two consecutive weeks of non-payment and no contact with the Director will result in termination of enrollment with the fees still due. Extended absences must be approved by the Executive Director/Director and need to be made at least 30 days before an extended absence except for emergencies. No extended absence can occur longer than 30 days and cannot be used in conjunction with vacation days.

SPECIAL EVENTS

To give back to our families, the Center has two special events occurring every quarter.

Friday Night Out –

- 1st Friday of January, April, July, December from 7:00 pm to 11:45 pm. Dinner will be provided with fun activities. The prices are \$15 per child for a child(ren) currently enrolled in the program and \$20 for a child(ren) not enrolled (Registration paperwork must be completed). There is a one-time registration fee of \$50 for a child(ren) not enrolled (if the family desire to become full time after the event (an additional \$50 will be charged to complete the \$100 full time enrollment fee). Late pick up fees charges still applies. Fees are non-refundable for no shows or cancellations.

Parent's Super Saturday

- 1st Saturday of February, May, August and November from 10 am to 4 pm. Lunch will be provided with fun activities. The prices are \$15 per child for a child(ren) currently enrolled in the program and \$20 for a child(ren) not enrolled (Registration paperwork must be completed). There is a one-time registration fee of \$50 for a child(ren) not enrolled (if the family desire to become full time after the event (an additional \$50 will be charged to complete the \$100 full time enrollment fee. Late pick up fees still applies. Fees are non-refundable for no shows or cancellations by parents.

A sign-up sheet will be available the week of the outing. All fees and registration must be paid by the Thursday before the outing. We must have 15 children signed up for each event or the event will be cancelled, so tell all your friends!

We hope you take advantage of this time to go shopping, get extra work done around the house or just relax.

CURRICULUM

The curriculum at Brighter Futures includes child-initiated and teacher-directed activities and experiences offered to young children that support and enrich their development physically, emotionally, socially, and cognitively. Brighter Futures uses the Learning Beyond Early Learning Curriculum for Center as guides for planning the curriculum in each of its program rooms. Each classroom has weekly lesson plans, posted in the classroom. These plans contain several activities, designed to foster each child's development, and the development of the group.

Lesson plans may be changed to accommodate the children's changing interests.

Each classroom is set up in Centers, which include blocks, dramatic play, books, gross motor, fine motor, and art. Outdoor play is important to a child's physical development and must be included in both the morning and afternoon schedule. Self-selection or "free-play" is a daily part of the curriculum and means a child has the opportunity to choose which Center or activity he/she participates in. This promotes creative expression and development of important social skills.

DAILY SCHEDULE AND ACTIVITIES

Our teachers work cooperatively to create a daily schedule and plan activities that meet each child's developmental abilities and needs. The daily schedule and activities create a balance between active and quiet times; large and small group, and individual activities; small and large muscle activities; indoor and outdoor play times; as well as times for self-selection and teacher-directed activities.

Consistency from day-to-day is particularly important to the overall well-being of the children and classroom environment. Children thrive on consistency! Routines will be maintained whenever possible for arrivals and departures; meals and snacks; resting or nap times; personal care routines like diapering/toileting and hand washing; and transitions.

FREE PLAY

"Free-play" (also called child-initiated activities, free choice, self-selection) activities are incorporated into the morning and afternoon schedule. During free-play, teachers actively participate with the children by asking questions about what the children are doing, participating

in their pretend play, reading books when prompted, encouraging children to try new activities or play with a new toy, etc. Free play is another opportunity for a child to grow socially and cognitively through the development of relationships.

OUTDOOR PLAY

Outdoor play is incorporated into the daily schedule for both the morning and afternoon. There is less structure in an outdoor learning environment; however, staff members actively engage in activities when prompted by the children. Outdoor play is an opportunity for children to run, jump, climb and use their bodies in ways that would otherwise be unsafe in an indoor classroom.

In addition, a large amount of social interaction takes place when children play outdoors. Because they are engaged in fewer teacher-directed activities and more child-directed play, children can choose their friends and who to interact with.

Children will go outside year-round, including winter. Only during extreme weather conditions will the children remain indoors, and the same time will be allowed for free play with limited outdoor toys. Our teachers refer to the Childcare Weather Watch poster from the South Carolina Department of Public Health to determine if it is too hot or cold to play outdoors.

It is important for parents to send their children in appropriate clothing and outerwear for the weather conditions (e.g., coats, boots, gloves, etc.). Please clearly label all articles of clothing with your child's name. Brighter Futures has a few extra hats and mittens, but not enough for every child. If a child is not dressed appropriately for the weather, he or she may have to be picked up or you will be asked to bring the appropriate clothing. Please ask your child's teacher if you have any questions about weather-appropriate clothing.

Brighter Futures does not take the children swimming or have swimming at the center.

NAP/REST TIME

The South Carolina Department of Social Services recommends that all children must be provided with a regularly scheduled nap or resting time. Children will not be forced to sleep but may be encouraged to lie quietly for a period. The length of time a child should have to remain resting varies by child. There is no hard and fast rule regarding the maximum amount of time a child should have to remain resting. Children should be provided with alternative quiet activities if unable to rest.

Children are encouraged to bring a familiar item from home to use during nap/rest time, such as a small blanket or stuffed animal. These items will be stored in your child's cubby or on his/her cot or mat; there is limited space for storage of such items. Please take this into consideration

when deciding which items to bring. All items should be clearly labeled with your child's name, as all class laundry is sent home to be washed weekly.

MULTIMEDIA

The use of multimedia in our program is an extension of the teaching and learning that takes place in our classrooms. Teachers may select movies, television, and computer game titles based upon weekly themes. Children are not required to view part or all of a video or television show, or to play computer games. Instead, the activity is offered as one of several Centers. All multimedia must have a rating of "PG" or "E" and must possess an educational theme. Children are limited to a specified amount of time, 3 (three) hours per week.

WEAPONS/VIOLENTPLAY

There is a strict policy of no weapons at Brighter Futures. If a child brings a weapon (swords, ninja throws, etc.) to Brighter Futures, the weapon will be placed in the office and the parent calls to remove the weapon immediately from the Center. Violent play behavior like boxing, cops and robbers and fighting is minimized in our programs. In young children, violent play often increases negative behavior and decreases acceptance of others. Bullying is not considered acceptable behavior; all efforts will be made to guide children in finding appropriate ways to interact with others.

PETS & VISITING ANIMALS

Staff may introduce a class pet to the classroom. Pets and visiting animals that are brought into the classroom must be carefully considered for their temperament, health risks, and appropriateness for young children. No animal may be brought into Brighter Futures without first notifying and receiving permission from the Director. Once approved by the Director, pets and visiting animals must have documentation from a licensed veterinarian or animal shelter to show that the animal(s) is fully immunized and that the animal is suitable for contact with children.

ASSESSMENTS & SCREENINGS

Screening and assessment provide valuable information about each child's interests, strengths, and needs. Screening gives a snapshot of whether the child's development is on track. Assessment is an ongoing process that includes observation and provides information about development over time. Systematic, ongoing child assessment provides information on children's development and learning. It helps to inform curriculum planning, teaching, and individualization for each child. All results for screening and assessments will be shared with parents within 10 days later. Any referrals that may be needed will be discussed with parents and how the process works.

The Learning Beyond Assessment™ is the assessment tool used by the program to evaluate and track each child's individual development during their time at Brighter Futures. It is an on-going

assessment system, meaning that teachers are continually watching, observing, and documenting each child's development. The same tool is used from birth through kindergarten, to allow a more complete picture of your child's development. By tracking a child's development, our teachers can plan activities that are appropriate for each child's developmental abilities.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent-teacher conferences will typically be offered at least twice per year or each time your child transitions classrooms. The goal of the parent-teacher conference is to gain insight into your child's development both in the Center setting as well as the home setting. During conferences, your child's development and any goals you may have for your child will be discussed. Parents are encouraged to request conferences whenever they feel it necessary.

ASSESSMENT PORTFOLIOS

A permanent assessment portfolio will be kept for each child and passed to the next teacher when a child transitions. Assessment portfolios will contain a variety of items, including photographs, examples of artwork, assessment profiles, and parent-teacher conference forms. Portfolios may be periodically taken home by families but should be returned promptly. When a child leaves Brighter Futures the assessment portfolio will be given to the family.

ASQ

Teachers and parents are required to complete a developmental screening to all children within 45 calendar days of enrollment. Staff administering the developmental screenings should take into consideration the needs and backgrounds of the children that they are serving and ensure that screenings are implemented using culturally, linguistically and developmentally responsive materials. The approved developmental screening tools are Ages and Stages Questionnaire, Third Edition (ASQ-3). If necessary, referrals will be made.

HEARING AND VISION SCREENING

Brighter Futures refer families to the OAE for hearing and Focus First | Impact America for vision. The information in forms is in both Spanish and English and is presented during Parent Orientation and should be conducted within the first 90 days of enrollment. Flyers are in both Spanish and English.

FIELD TRIPS

Brighter Futures offers a variety of experiences both at and away from the Center. Field trips inside the Summerville city limits and/or longer than two hours will require a "Field Trip Permission Form." Parents will be notified at least two weeks in advance of all field trips requiring a "Field Trip Permission Form." If you do not wish for your child to attend a particular

field trip, please find alternative childcare arrangements for that day, as we will not have staff available to stay behind with children not participating in the field trip.

As a participant in our childcare program, your child may participate in short, unannounced field trips including but not limited to walks as a class around the perimeter of the building and/or nearby neighborhoods; trips to local playgrounds; trips to local businesses. Teacher-child ratios are always maintained. A “Parent/Guardian Permission” form must be completed at the time of enrollment for this type of field trip.

RULES RELATED TO FIELD TRIPS

Before a field trip is approved, enough parent volunteers must be available to attend the trip. Brighter Futures staff-to-child ratios with staff members only will be:

- Three-year-olds: 1:12 ratio
- Four-year-olds: 1:12 ratio
- Five-year-olds: 1:12

Car Seats

- Parents must provide a car seat for their child, as well as install the car seat into the vehicle if we use a passenger school bus. This will ensure each car seat is installed properly.
- Winter coats must be removed prior to buckling the child in their seat.
- If the child is in a five-point harness, the chest clip must slide up to the child’s armpit level. The straps should be tight enough that you can fit no more than one finger underneath.
- If the child is in a booster, the seatbelt must stay in front of the child.

Head Counts

Head counts will take place every 5-10 minutes during a field trip, as well as at the following times:

1. Before leaving the classroom
2. Before starting the vehicle (after buckling children)
3. After students exit the vehicle at the field trip location
4. After entering the field trip location
5. When exiting the field trip location
6. Before starting the vehicle (after buckling children)
7. After exiting the vehicle at the Center
8. When returning into the classroom

Walking Lines

When traveling from one destination to the next in a line, one teacher will remain at the beginning of the line and one teacher will remain at the end of the line. Headcounts will happen every five minutes.

Required Materials

1. Written Permission slips prior to transportation or trip
2. Cell Phone and First Aid Kit
3. Clipboard containing:
 - a. that day's attendance
 - b. children's "If Lost" headshots.
4. Each child must wear a Brighter Futures field trip "If Lost" lanyard.
5. Pocket lanyards for each teacher contain:
 - a. Class list with that day's tracking attendance
 - b. Class total number
 - c. Emergency medical information and contact information
 - d. Brighter Futures phone number
6. A copy of Brighter Futures missing child procedure

Other Field Trip Policies

Only staff members or the child's parents are allowed to take children to the bathroom.

CLOTHING AND ITEMS FROM HOME

DRESS CODE

Please send your child to Brighter Futures in comfortable play clothes and shoes. Play is usually active and often messy; comfortable, washable clothes are important if your child is to participate fully in the program. Outdoor play is scheduled every day as an essential part of our planned curriculum. We expect all children to be dressed appropriately for both indoor and outdoor activities.

All children occasionally get their clothes wet and have toileting accidents. Whenever this occurs, it is best to change the child into an extra set of clothing provided by the family. Your child's teacher will request that you bring a complete change of clothing, including underwear and shoes, to be kept at Center and replenished as needed. Due to health reasons, if a child soils their underwear, it will be thrown away. Please be sure to clearly label all items of clothing. Let the teacher know whenever your child's clothing or other items cannot be located.

Please do not bring your children in sandals, flip flops, spaghetti straps or breakaway pants. If you put your daughters in dresses, we suggest they wear shorts underneath. Socks must be worn with all shoes. Tennis shoes are the best to wear at the Center the different surfaces and materials

used on our playgrounds. Black soled or slippery shoes are dangerous on the ground as well as on the playground equipment.

As for parents, the Center asks that you are appropriately dress during drop off, pick up and special events.

ITEMS FROM HOME

Toys, stuffed animals, or other items from home may help your child feel more comfortable at the Center from time to time. However, it is often difficult for young children to share their special “treasures” with classmates. We ask that all items brought to Brighter Futures from home be placed in your child’s cubby shortly after arrival. Please clearly label all belongings brought from home. It is recommended that items of value, such as iPods or handheld gaming systems be left at home, due to the risk of damage or theft. Brighter Futures is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged items.

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES

MANDATED REPORTING OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE AND/OR NEGLECT

Under the Child Protective Services Act, mandated reporters are required to report any suspicion of abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. The employees of Brighter Futures are considered mandated reporters, under this law. The employees of the Center are not required to discuss their suspicions with parents prior to reporting the matter to the appropriate authorities, nor are they required to investigate the cause of any suspicious marks, behavior, or condition prior to making a report. Under the Act, mandated reporters can be held criminally responsible if they fail to report suspected abuse or neglect. We take this responsibility very seriously and will make all warranted reports to the appropriate authorities. The Child Protective Services Act is designed to protect the welfare and best interest of all children.

As mandated reporters, the staff cannot be held liable for reports made to Child Protective Services which are determined to be unfounded, provided the report was made in “good faith.”

Causes for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect include, but are not limited to:

- Unusual bruising, marks, or cuts on the child’s body
- Severe verbal reprimands
- Constant improper clothing relating to size, cleanliness, season
- Transporting a child without appropriate child restraints (e.g. car seats, seat belts, etc.)
- Dropping off or picking up a child while under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol
- Extended periods of not providing appropriate meals including a water for your child
- Leaving a child unattended for any amount of time
- Failure to attend to the special needs of a child who is disabled.

- Sending a sick child to Center over medicated to hide symptoms, which would typically require the child to be kept at home until symptoms subside.
- Children who exhibit behavior consistent with an abusive situation.

ILLNESS

Our priority at Brighter Futures is providing a healthy, safe learning environment for all children. A child will be sent home as soon as possible if any of the following is experienced: an illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in activities (as determined by the staff); an illness results in a greater need for care than the staff can reasonably provide without compromising the health or safety of other children in the classroom; or a child is experiencing any of the following conditions:

- Fever of 100 or greater, until 24 hours symptom free without fever reducing medication
- Signs/symptoms of severe illness, including lethargy, uncontrolled coughing, inexplicable irritability or persistent crying, difficulty breathing, and/or wheezing.
- Diarrhea (not associated with diet changes or medications) with multiple loose or watery stool instances within an hour; or accompanied with fever and or vomiting. Child cannot return until diarrhea stops for 24 hours or the continued diarrhea is deemed not be infectious by a licensed health care professional.
- Blood in stools not explainable by dietary change, medication, or hard stools
- Vomiting (One instance) the child can return after vomiting has been resolved for 24 hours or until a health care provider determines the cause for vomiting is not contagious and the child is not in danger of dehydration.
- Persistent abdominal pain (continues more than 2 hours) or intermittent pain associated with fever or other signs/symptoms of illness.
- Mouth sores with drooling, unless a health care provider determines the sores are not contagious or the Director believes the child is safe to be in the Center.
- Rash until a physician determines that these symptoms do not indicate a communicable disease, or the Director believes the child is safe to be in the Center.
- Pink eye (conjunctivitis) until after treatment has been initiated for 24 hours and no eye pulse is present.
- Scabies, until after treatment has been completed and no signs or tracts or scabs in the skin.
- Tuberculosis, until a health care provider states that the child is on appropriate therapy and can attend childcare or the Director believes the child is safe to be in the Center.
- Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated and no open sores.
- Strep throat, until 36 hours after initial antibiotic treatment and cessation of fever
- Chicken pox, until all sores have dried and crusted (usually 6 days)
- Hand Foot and Mouth sores have dried and crusted and no fever.

- Pertussis, until 5 days of appropriate antibiotic treatment has been completed.
- Mumps, until 9 days after onset of symptoms or the Director believes the child is safe to be in the Center.
- Hepatitis A virus, until 1 week after onset of illness or the Director believes the child is safe to be in the Center.
- Measles, until 7 days after onset of rash, no present rash or the Director believes the child is safe to be in the Center.
- Rubella, until 6 days after onset of rash, no present rash or the Director believes the child is safe to be in the Center.
- Unspecified respiratory tract illness accompanied by another illness which requires exclusion.
- Herpes simplex, with uncontrollable drooling or open sores
- Pneumonia, until 1 week after onset of illness or the Director believes the child is safe to be in the Center.
- Covid 19, one week after medical diagnosis, no fever or persistent cough.

A child who becomes ill while at Brighter Futures must be removed from the classroom in order to limit exposure of other children to communicable diseases. An ill child will be sent to the office to wait for his/her parent to arrive. For this reason, we ask families to make every effort to pick up a sick child as soon as possible.

Please contact Brighter Futures by 8:00 am whenever your child is ill.

Brighter Futures reserves the right to make the final determination of exclusion due to illness.

SURGERY

Children may not attend the Center the same day or day after that they have surgery. Young children recover quickly, but there is always a risk of reactions to anesthetics. The Center does not have the materials or staff to react to such emergencies. A doctor's release is required for child to return to the Center.

NOTICE OF EXPOSURE & REPORTING DISEASE

If your child is exposed to a communicable disease, a notice will be posted at the front door or on the door to your child's classroom. If your child or anyone in your household becomes ill with a communicable disease, please notify the Director immediately.

In the event a child is reported to have a communicable disease, the Director will notify the health department.

HAND WASHING

Frequent hand washing with soap and warm, running water is the most effective way to reduce and prevent the spread of illnesses commonly found in childcare such as the flu, diarrhea, and pink eye. Parents are encouraged to assist their child in the hand washing process upon arrival.

Other times your child (and staff members) will be expected to wash their hands:

- Upon arriving at the Center or when changing classrooms
- After each diaper change or using the toilet
- Before and after mealtimes
- Before and after administering medication
- After handling bodily fluids (mucus, blood vomit)
- Before and after using the sensory table
- After coming indoors from the playground
- After handling pets and other animals
- After cleaning or handling garbage

Warm, running water (no colder than 60 degrees F) and soap must be used. Hands must be rubbed vigorously for at least 25 seconds, including the backs of hands, between fingers, under nails, and under any jewelry. A disposable paper towel should be used to dry hands and turn off faucet. Help reinforce the importance of hand washing by encouraging frequent hand washing at home as well.

MEDICATIONS

Prescription medications must be given to a staff member in the original container, clearly labeled with the child's full name and birth date. **NO OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICATIONS WILL BE GIVEN WITHOUT A DOCTOR'S PRESCRIPTION.** Brighter Futures staff will not administer any medication without a signed Medication Authorization Form. Forms can be obtained from your child's teacher or from the Director.

All medications will be stored in the office and only administered by Directors or lead teachers. Prescription medications will only be given if a doctor's note is provided with a beginning and end date. A medical authorization form must also be filled out and signed by a parent or guardian. Prescription medication will only be given at the Center if they are not able to be given at home. (ex. Twice daily can be administered at home. Three times per day requires a middle of the day dose and can be given at the Center.)

Parents are responsible for ensuring that all prescription medication is properly labeled by a pharmacist and replaced prior to the expiration date. Parents and teachers are not allowed to administer any kind of vitamins or medications by adding them to the child's food, cup, or thermos.

PHYSICALS AND IMMUNIZATION RECORDS

Each child must have a current physical and immunization record on file at Brighter Futures. The physical on file must be updated at least annually; immunization records must be updated whenever a new immunization is received. Updated immunization records and physicals may be faxed to Brighter Futures directly from your healthcare provider. No child will be enrolled without state and federal mandated vaccinations.

DOCUMENTATION OF ACCIDENTS/INCIDENTS

Staff members shall document accidents and incidents that occur at Brighter Futures using an Accident/Incident Report. Please document all biting incidents as accidents. If a biter breaks the skin of another child, an accident/incident report needs to be completed for the biter as well as the child who was bitten. Use great detail when explaining events, but never include other children's names. If the injury is serious, a parent needs to be contacted before pick-up. The parents shall sign the report the same day as the incident. A copy may be given to the parents.

All Accident/Incident Reports must be given to the Director to be placed in the child's permanent file.

DOCUMENTATION OF HEALTH INCIDENTS

Each time a parent is contacted regarding an ill child or symptoms of illness, a Health Incident Form will be completed. A copy of the form will be given to the parent and the original to the Director to be placed in the child's permanent file. All parents will be notified of any communicable illnesses present in the Center via a sign posted on the main entrance to the Center explaining the illness. In addition, parents with children in the classroom of the infected child will receive an email regarding the illness.

DOCUMENTATION OF ALLERGIES

A child with allergies must have an Allergy Action Plan posted in a visible location in the classroom. If the allergy is food related, an Allergy Action Plan must also be posted in the kitchen area. All staff working in the classroom of child with allergies must review the Allergy Action Plan to ensure understanding of emergency procedures should the child have an allergic reaction. All allergic reactions must be documented with a Health Incident Form.

Children with Severe Allergies For the safety of your child, parents are required to provide a signed copy of the "Severe Allergies" form which is in the registration link/paperwork, detailing any allergies, food or otherwise, from which their child suffers, at the time of enrollment or when the allergy is discovered. This form must be completely filled out by the child's physician and parent(s) or legal guardian(s), and must be updated every twelve months, or more frequently, as

needed. In addition to this form, parents must provide a copy of any additional physician's orders and procedural guidelines relating to the prevention and treatment of the child's allergy.

Parents must also execute a "Release and Waiver of Liability for Administering Emergency Treatment to Children with Severe Allergies" form. This form releases the Center from liability for administering treatment to children with severe allergies and taking other necessary actions set forth in the "Severe Allergies" form, provided the Center exercises reasonable care in taking such actions. Any medication required to treat an allergic reaction must be provided in accordance with the Medication Policy detailed herein. It is the parent's responsibility to monitor the expiration date of their child's medication and replace it with the updated medication. The Center reserves the right to exclude any child with severe allergies who do not have up-to-date rescue medications in their classroom. Attendance can resume once the proper medications are provided and accompanying paperwork for the medication is completed.

DOCUMENTATION OF SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS

An Emergency Care Plan will be on file for any child with special health care needs (seizures, etc.). A copy of the Emergency Care Plan must be kept in the classroom emergency binder. All staff working in the classroom must familiarize themselves with this plan, should an emergency arise. If necessary, staff will receive training regarding a child's specific health care needs.

EMERGENCYMEDICAL/DENTALPROCEDURE

It is important that parents complete and update, as needed, an Emergency Contact and Parental Consent Form. This form contains contact information for both the parents as well as the individuals authorized to pick up the child in the event of illness or emergency. In addition, the form allows Brighter Futures Center staff members to seek emergency medical or dental care from authorized care providers in the event of serious injury. **It is the responsibility of the parents to complete this form and to make corrections to this information when necessary.**

- If a child becomes ill or injured after arriving at the Center, the Lead Teacher will attempt to contact the parent(s) at all available telephone numbers. If a parent cannot be reached, the individuals listed as emergency contacts/authorized pick-up persons on the Emergency Contact & Parental Consent form will be called.
- Children who are ill or seriously injured will be sent to the office and remain under the supervision of the Director until a parent arrives.

If the child requires immediate medical attention:

- The staff member who witnessed the emergency will remain with the injured child and instruct someone else to call 911. If no one is available, first ensure the child is stable and if possible, bring the child with you to call 911 for Emergency Medical Services (EMS).
- If EMS must transport a child to the hospital, a staff member who witnessed the emergency will accompany EMS with the child to the hospital, bringing the child's physical exam, immunization records, and Emergency Contact & Parental Consent Form.

- The Director will contact the parent(s).

TRANSPORTATION

Brighter Futures, from time to time, may rent commercial 16 passenger school bus for transportation to and from field trips. Staff members who operate a Brighter Futures school bus must have a valid driver's license. Written permission from parents is required for any transportation of children. Individuals who volunteer to provide transportation for a Brighter Futures event must be at least 21 and provide:

- Proof of a valid driver's license and current insurance
- Evidence of a safe driving record for at least 5 years, with no crashes where a citation was issued.
- No record of substance abuse or conviction for crimes of violence or child abuse.
- No alcohol or other drugs associated with impaired ability to drive within 12 hours prior to transporting children.
- No criminal record of crimes against or involving children, child neglect or abuse, or any crime of violence.

SUNSCREEN & INSECT REPELLANT

Between the months of March and October, all families will be required to supply sunscreen for their child/ren for outdoor activities. A permission slip must be on file before sunscreen will be applied to a child. Sunscreen must be SPF 15 or above and will be applied by classroom teachers regularly throughout the day. Parents are encouraged to apply insect repellant to their child before arriving at Brighter Futures for the day, as Brighter Futures staff are not permitted to apply insect repellant.

TOBACCO USE

Cigarettes and smokeless tobacco products are prohibited on Brighter Futures premises, including parking lots and outdoor play areas. Smoking and the use of smokeless tobacco products is also prohibited in Brighter Futures vehicles or in personal vehicles being used for the transportation of Brighter Futures children, and while on field trips. Parents who are smoking in their cars must dispose of the cigarette prior to entering the parking lot. Please **DO NOT** throw cigarettes butts in the parking lot.

ACCESS POLICY

Any person in the Center who is not an owner, staff member, substitute, or subcontracted staff or volunteer who has had a record check and approval to be involved with childcare shall not have unrestricted access to children for whom that person is not the parent, guardian or custodian, nor be counted in the staff to child ratio. Unrestricted access means that a person has contact with a child alone or is directly responsible for childcare.

A person who does not have unrestricted access will be under the direct supervision and monitoring of a paid staff member at all times and will not be allowed to assume any child care responsibilities. The primary responsibility of the supervision and monitoring will be assumed by the Lead Teacher unless he/she delegates it to the Full Time Assistant Teacher due to a conflict of interest with the person.

Center staff will approach anyone who is on the property of the Center without their knowledge to ask what their purpose is. If a staff member is unsure about the reason, they must contact the Director to get approval for the person to be on site. If it becomes a dangerous situation, staff will follow the “Dangerous Adult” procedure. Non-agency persons who are on the property for other reasons such as maintenance, repairs, etc., will be monitored by a paid staff member and will not be allowed to interact with children on the premises.

A sex offender who has been convicted of a sex offense against a minor (even if the sex offender is the parent, guardian or custodian) who is required to register with the South Carolina sex offender registry:

- Shall not operate, manage, be employed by, or act as a contractor or volunteer at the childcare Center.
- Shall not be on the property of the childcare Center, whether a parent or on the authorized pickup list; nor come in with a parent or person authorized to pick up a child. The Director is not obligated to provide permission or consult with their DHS licensing agent first.

AFFIDAVIT POLICY

At times families may be dealing with difficult situations at home. When legal matters are present in the home, families may need to collect affidavits from their legal team. Due to the nature of the relationship between caregiver and child, families may choose to ask a Brighter Futures Center staff member to provide such a statement. Our program’s priority is providing the best possible care when children are away from home and our focus will remain on the child, making sure all their needs are met during what could be a difficult time at home. Brighter Futures Center staff members will not provide written statements or affidavits of a professional nature to families.

POSITIVE REDIRECTION AND DISCIPLINE POLICY

Praise and positive reinforcement are effective methods of behavior management of children. When children receive positive, nonviolent, and understanding interactions from adults and others, they develop good self-concepts, problem solving abilities, and self-discipline. Based on this belief, Brighter Futures uses a positive approach to discipline and practices the following discipline and behavior management techniques.

<p>WE DO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate to children using positive statements. • Communicate with children on their level. • Talk with children in a calm quiet manner. • Explain unacceptable behavior to children. • Give attention to children for positive behavior. • Praise and encourage the children. • Reason with and set limits for the children. • Apply rules consistently. • Model appropriate behavior. • Set up the classroom environment to prevent problems. • Provide alternatives and redirect children to acceptable activity. • Give children opportunities to make choices and solve problems. • Help children talk out problems and think of solutions. • Listen to children and respect the children's needs, desires, and feelings. • Provide appropriate words to help solve conflicts. • Use storybooks and discussion to work through common conflicts. 	<p>WE DO NOT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inflict corporal punishment in any manner upon a child. (Corporal punishment is defined as the use of physical force to the body as a discipline measure. Physical force to the body includes, but is not limited to, spanking, hitting, shaking, biting, pinching, pushing, pulling, or slapping.) • Use any strategy that hurts, shames, or belittles a child. • Use any strategy that threatens, intimidates, or forces a child. • Use food as a form of reward or punishment. • Use or withhold physical activity as a punishment. • Shame or punish a child if a bathroom accident occurs. • Embarrass any child in front of others. • Compare children. • Place children in a locked and/or dark room. • Leave any child alone, unattended or without supervision. • Allow discipline of a child by other children. • Criticize, make fun of, or otherwise belittle a child's parents, families, or ethnic groups. • Use prone restraint of a child (defines as all items or measures used to limit or control the movement or normal function of a child's body while the child is in a face down position).
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Conferences will be scheduled with parents if disciplinary problems occur. If a child's behavior consistently endangers the safety of the children around him/her, then the Director has the right, after meeting with the parents and documenting behavior problems and interventions, to terminate childcare services for that child.

GUIDANCE STRATEGIES

Every adult who cares for children has a responsibility to guide, correct and socialize children toward appropriate behaviors. These adult actions often are called child guidance and discipline. Positive guidance and discipline are crucial because they promote children's self-control, teach children responsibility and help children make thoughtful choices. The more effective caregivers are at encouraging appropriate child behavior, the less time and effort adults will spend correcting children's misbehavior.

Effective guidance and discipline focus on the development of the child. They also preserve the child's self-esteem and dignity. Actions that insult or belittle are likely to cause children to view their caregivers negatively, which can inhibit learning and can teach the child to be unkind to others. However, actions that acknowledge the child's efforts and progress, no matter how slow or small, are likely to encourage healthy development. Teaching children self-discipline is a demanding task. It requires patience, thoughtful attention, cooperation and a good understanding of the child. Brighter Futures staff will use only positive guidance techniques.

When interacting with young children, staff should ask themselves the following questions:
“Am I...”

- Validating feelings?
- Asking open-ended questions?
- Encouraging problem solving?
- Respecting children's choices?
- Using praise and positive reinforcement?
- Talking with children – not at them?
- Circulating throughout the classroom?
- At the child's eye level?

REASONS FOR MISBEHAVIOR

If caregivers understand why children misbehave, they can be more successful at reducing behavior problems. Listed here are some of the possible reasons why children misbehave.

- Children want to test whether caregivers will enforce rules.
- They experience different sets of expectations between Center and home.
- A child does not understand the rules or is held to expectations that are beyond their developmental levels.
- They want to assert themselves and their independence.
- They feel ill, bored, hungry or sleepy.
- They lack accurate information and prior experience.
- They have been previously "rewarded" for their misbehavior with adult attention.

PREVENTING MISBEHAVIOR

Child misbehavior is impossible to prevent completely. Children, usually curious and endlessly creative, are likely to do things parents and other caregivers have not expected. However, there are many positive steps caregivers can take to help prevent misbehavior.

- Set clear, consistent rules. (e.g., walking feet; gentle touches)
- Make certain the environment is safe and worry-free.
- Show interest in the child's activities. (e.g., participating in activities with the children so they stay interested in longer periods)
- Encourage self-control and independence by providing meaningful choices. (e.g., "You may pick up the blocks or art Center.")
- Focus on the desired behavior, rather than the one to be avoided. (e.g., "Ashley, please use gentle touches with your friends.")
- Build children's images of themselves as trustworthy, responsible and cooperative.
- Give clear directions, one at a time.
- Say "Yes" whenever possible.
- Notice and pay attention to children when they do things right. (e.g., "Joey is playing so nicely. I like it when you keep the blocks on the table.")
- Encourage children often and generously.
- Set a good example. (e.g., using a quiet voice when children should be quiet)
- Help children see how their actions affect others.

RESPONDING TO MISBEHAVIOR

Below are strategies Brighter Futures staff will use to respond to child misbehavior. Remember, however, that it's always a good idea if rules are explained fully and clearly understood before misbehavior occurs. Whenever possible, involve children in making the rules for the classroom.

- **Redirection**
 - This strategy should be used most frequently when working with young children. If a child is not following the rules or being uncooperative, quickly get the child's attention and introduce another activity. For example, "Kate, please help me water the flowers now. You've been riding the bike for a long time and it's now Logan's turn."
- **Logical Consequences**
 - These are structured consequences that follow specific misbehaviors. The child should be able to see how the behavior and the consequence are directly related. For example, Andrew is standing on his chair at lunch. His teacher should remind him that if he stands on his chair, he could fall and get hurt; this will make him sad.
- **Participate in the Solution**
 - If a child damages something, he/she needs to help in fixing it or in cleaning up. If a child causes someone distress, he/she should help in relieving that. For example, "It made Brandon very sad when you told him he was ugly. What can you do/say to help me make him feel better?"
- **Natural consequences**

- Allowing children to experience the consequences of their behavior is also called learning the hard way. For example, Laura does not put her books back in her Center bag after she finishes reading. One day she loses a book, and therefore must find a way to replace it. Only use natural consequences when they will not endanger the child's health or safety.
- **“Take a break” or “Cozy Corner”**
 - In some instances, a child may need to be removed from a particular situation in which he/she has become overwhelmed or violent. The child should be directed to “take a break” or sit in the “cozy corner.” This strategy gives the child a chance to calm down, regain control, and reflect quietly on her or his behavior away from others. Once the child has calmed down, staff should talk with the child about the actions that led up to and resulted in needing a break or being sent to calm down. For example, "Hannah, we have talked often about how hitting is not acceptable. But because you hit John, please leave the blocks Center and go to the cozy corner. I will talk to you when you are ready."

If these actions do not help in reducing or changing behavior the following will take place:

1. Staff will report behavior and what strategies have been attempted to the Director (s).
2. The Director will observe the child and meet with the Lead Teacher to develop a behavior management plan.
3. The behavior management plan will be discussed with the parent and then put into practice.
4. The Director, Lead Teacher and Assistant Teachers, and parents will evaluate the behavior management plan. If needed, adjustments will be made.
5. The Center will partner with an organization to help: Tri-County Therapy, PEAR, etc...

*** As a last resort, if a child's behavior becomes threatening to themselves, other children, staff or teachers, the child will be removed from the classroom and possibly the program for a period.*

USEFUL PHRASES

The following phrases are useful when problem-solving with children.

- Instead of “No” or “Don’t”
 - Say “Please stop”, “I don’t like that”, “That’s not OK”, or “That is not a choice”
- Instead of “That’s not nice”
 - Say “That’s not OK”, “Please use gentle touches”, or “That hurts Jordan”
- Instead of “No running”
 - Say “I need you to use your walking feet” or “You may run when we go outside”
- Instead of “Stop crying”
 - Say “I need you to use your words to tell me what is wrong”

- Instead of “Can you put away your toys?” (If it is not a choice, do not pose it as a question)
 - Say “You may help me pick up the blocks, or help Alyssa pick up the puzzles”
- Instead of “I said yes” (when a child tells you “no”)
 - Say “No is not a choice; I need you to...”

BITING POLICY

Biting is a behavior that usually appears between the ages of one and **three years**. While biting is an age-appropriate behavior, it is important to remember it is also an unacceptable behavior in a childcare environment. Children bite for a variety of reasons: teething, sensory exploration, cause and effect, imitation, crowding, seeking attention, frustration and stress. Biting is not something to blame on children, their parents or their teachers. There are a variety of strategies we implement at Brighter Futures to prevent and stop biting.

This is the process followed when a child bites:

- The biting child is stopped and told, “Biting hurts” in a firm voice. Teachers should remain calm, being careful not to show anger or frustration towards the child.
- The biting child is removed from the situation. Depending upon the observed motive for the bite, the separation may include re-direction or meeting the child’s needs. As little attention as possible will be placed on the biting child, to avoid reinforcing the behavior.
- Appropriate first aid will be provided to the child who was bitten. The bite will be washed with soap and water; cold compress will be applied to reduce pain and swelling. A bandage will be applied if necessary.
- If the skin is broken with a bite, both parents will be notified, and the biter will be sent home for the day.

It is important to explore the reasons for biting when it occurs. Teachers need to work with parents to gather information about the child’s behavior and begin observations to determine the reasons for biting. Examples of triggers would be communication deficits, transitions, hunger, lack of sleep, need for oral stimulation or teething pain. Once triggers are identified, staff can work on prevention strategies and start teaching replacement skills.

Below are the steps the teacher will take to identify triggers and replace the behavior:

1. The teacher will examine the context in which the biting is occurring and look for patterns. The following questions should be asked:
 - Was the space too crowded?
 - Were there too few toys?
 - Was there too little to do or too much waiting?

- Was the child who bit getting the attention and care he/she deserved at other times?
- 2. The teacher will change the environment, routines or activities if necessary.
- 3. The teacher will work with the child who is biting to resolve conflicts and frustrations in more appropriate ways.
- 4. The teacher will observe the child, to get an idea of why and when they are likely to bite.
- 5. The teacher will identify children likely to be bitten and make special efforts to reduce their chance of being bitten.
- 6. The teacher, parent and Director will meet regularly to regulate an action plan and measure outcomes.
- 7. If biting continues the teacher will observe the group more closely and work with the parents to seek out additional resources as necessary to shadow the child who is biting.

All information is confidential, and the names of the children involved in the incident are not shared between parents. In addition, biting is always documented on an Incident/Accident Report which is completed and signed by a teacher and parent. A copy is provided to the parent and the original kept in the child's permanent enrollment file in the office.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

FIRE/EMERGENCY DRILLS

The Child Development Center conducts monthly fire, emergency/evacuation, and lockdown drills. Parents, staff, and children will not be made aware of drill dates or times, as this is the most effective way to assess the effectiveness of fire and emergency/evacuation plans.

During a fire/emergency/lockdown drill or real fire/emergency/lockdown situation, parents may not sign children into or out of the Center. Parents must wait until the drill is complete and children have returned to the building to sign their child out of the Center. Parents may wait with the child's class in the designated safe zone outside of the building until the drill is complete.

EMERGENCYMEDICAL/DENTALPROCEDURE

It is important that parents complete and update, as needed, an Emergency Contact and Parental Consent Form. This form contains contact information for both the parents as well as the individuals authorized to pick up the child in the event of illness or emergency. In addition, the form allows Brighter Futures CENTER staff members to seek emergency medical or dental care from authorized care providers in the event of serious injury. **It is the responsibility of the parents to complete this form and to make corrections to this information when necessary.**

- If a child becomes ill or injured after arriving at the Center, the Director or Lead Teacher will attempt to contact the parent(s) at all available telephone numbers. If a parent cannot be reached, the individuals listed as emergency contacts/authorized pick-up persons on the Emergency Contact & Parental Consent form will be called.

- Children who are ill or seriously injured will be sent to the office and remain under the supervision of the Director until a parent arrives.

If the child requires immediate medical attention:

- The staff member who witnessed the emergency will remain with the injured child and instruct someone else to call 911. If no one is available, first ensure the child is stable and if possible, bring the child with you to call 911 for Emergency Medical Services (EMS).
- If EMS must transport a child to the hospital, a staff member who witnessed the emergency will accompany EMS with the child to the hospital, bringing the child's physical exam, immunization records, and Emergency Contact & Parental Consent Form.
- The Director will contact the parent(s).

FIRE, TORNADO, BOMB OR OTHER EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

Fire regulations and tornado warning procedures are posted near the exits in each classroom. Fire and tornado drills are conducted each month; all classrooms are required to participate.

In the event of a fire, bomb threat, or other evacuation emergencies, the children and teachers will immediately leave the building and meet on the sidewalk northeast of the building. In case of a tornado, each classroom has a designated area to seek shelter until the emergency is over.

Children and teachers will take shelter at Senior Helpers next door for emergency evacuations. Parents will be called as soon as safely possible following an emergency.

For the safety of children, parents, and staff, we ask that parents do not attempt to pick up their child **during** an evacuation emergency so a proper head count of the children can be conducted to ensure all children was safely evacuated out of the building. Once the children and teachers are in a safe space and accounted for, the children will be released to their parents.

BLIZZARD/SEVERE WINTER WEATHER

The Director will monitor the weather and local news stations throughout the day to determine when it is appropriate to close the Center early or cancel care for the following day. The Director and Lead Teachers are responsible for contacting parents to inform them of the situation. Routine classroom activities will continue until parents arrive.

MISSING OR ABDUCTED CHILD

- In the event of a missing child, the Lead Teacher will search for the child in the immediate area, while another staff member calls the Director to help with the search.
- If the child cannot be located in a reasonable amount of time, the Director will notify the police, DSS and the child's parents.
- In the event of an abducted child, the Lead Teacher must **immediately** contact the Director, the Police Department, and the child's parents.

DANGEROUS INTRUDER

A dangerous adult is considered someone who is displaying inappropriate or threatening behavior, carrying a weapon, or showing signs of intoxication from either drugs or alcohol. This also includes an individual that is prohibited by court order from picking up or having contact with a child.

If there is an intruder or dangerous adult in the Center:

- Staff members in the immediate area will position themselves between the children and intruder/dangerous adults.
- A staff member will attempt to have the parent/intruder move to the hallway and close the classroom door, while a second staff member calls the Director to assist with the situation.

IN THE EVENT OF AN INTRUDER OR DANGEROUS ADULT:

- Staff members will be notified by the Director of the threat using the “All Page” feature on the telephones.
- ALL staff and children must return to their classrooms; lock all classroom doors; and sit on the floor away from doors and windows. Wait for an “All Clear” from the Director before continuing with activities.
- The Director, or a staff member designated by the Director, will be on watch.
- The Director will contact the local police department to notify them of the situation.
- The Director will instruct the intruder or dangerous adult to leave the premises, maintaining visual contact with the individual until the police arrive, or until the individual leaves.

POWER FAILURE

Staff members and children should remain in the classroom and if possible, proceed with activities as usual, or may go to the outdoor playground until power resumes.

If power cannot be restored within a reasonable amount of time, the Center will close and DSS and parents will be contacted.

- Lead Teachers are responsible for contacting parents to inform them of the closing and of the need to immediately pick up their child.
- Activities will resume as soon as possible until parents arrive.

WEAPONS

Brighter Futures Center will not permit or tolerate the possession, display, or use of weapons by any person on Center premises or vehicles, while the person is participating in or attending Brighter Futures events and activities, or while the person is away from Center grounds if such conduct directly affects the good order and management of the children. This does not apply to a guard, law enforcement officer, or member of the armed forces on the property for official

business. Students who violate this policy may be subject to expulsion and/or other disciplinary action. Weapons shall be taken from students and others who bring them onto Center premises, vehicles or to Center activities. Violations of this section will be reported to law enforcement agencies in accordance with the law.

Definition of Weapons

Any object which could be used to injure another person, and which has no Center-related purpose will be considered a weapon. An object which has a Center-related purpose, but which is used to threaten or inflict injury will also be considered a weapon. Weapons include, but are not limited to, knives of all types, guns, firearms, fireworks, explosives or other chemicals, and simulated (including toy) weapons.

SANCTIONS.

Students may be subject to expulsion for violating this policy depending on the weapon. The administration may impose a lesser sanction if in their judgment all the circumstances surrounding the incident warrant a less severe sanction. The following serve as guidelines for the administration when weapons which are not firearms are involved.

1. Suspension for three to five days for possession of a weapon.
2. Suspension for five to ten days for display of a weapon.
3. Suspension with recommendation for expulsion for displaying a weapon in a threatening manner or for use of a weapon to inflict harm or injury to another person or for placing others in imminent danger.

HANDLING, STORAGE, AND DISPOSAL OF HAZARDOUS MATERIALS AND BIOLOGICAL CONTAMINANTS POLICY

Brighter Futures Child Development Center is committed to maintaining a safe and healthy environment for children, staff, and visitors. To ensure the safety of all individuals, we strictly regulate the handling, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials and biological contaminants in compliance with state and federal regulations.

STORAGE AND USE OF HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

- a. Toxic substances must be stored out of the reach of children in a locked cabinet. Toxic substances or hazardous materials include but are not limited to: chemicals, cleaning products, disinfectant sprays, insecticides, gasoline products.
- b. Toxic substances must not be used while children are present.
- c. Flammable materials should be stored in a separate building or area away from high temperatures and ignition sources, inaccessible to children.
- d. Toxic substances and hazardous materials must be stored away from food and medication.

- e. Poisonous plants must not be allowed in the center.
- f. Chemicals used to control odors must not be allowed, e.g., moth balls, air fresheners, essential oils, toilet/urinal deodorizer blocks.

HANDLING AND DISPOSAL OF BIOLOGICAL CONTAMINANTS

- a. Staff must follow universal precautions when handling bodily fluids. This includes using disposable gloves, properly washing hands before and after contact, and safely disposing of contaminated materials.
- b. Any material that comes into contact with bodily fluids, such as tissues, disposable gloves, and cleaning rags, must be placed in a sealed plastic bag and disposed of in a designated, covered waste bin.
- c. Surfaces contaminated with bodily fluids must be cleaned and disinfected immediately with an approved disinfectant.
- d. Any soiled clothing must be placed in a sealed plastic bag and returned to the child's parent/guardian at pickup.
- e. Staff members who come into contact with bodily fluids must wash hands thoroughly with soap and warm water immediately after removal of gloves.

COMPLIANCE AND MONITORING

All staff members must adhere to this policy at all times. The program director is responsible for ensuring compliance and conducting regular checks to verify that hazardous materials and biological contaminants are managed appropriately. Any violations of this policy will result in corrective action, including retraining and possible disciplinary measures.

This policy must be reviewed annually and updated as needed to remain in compliance with local, state, and federal guidelines.

This policy is designed to promote the health and safety of all children, staff, and visitors at Brighter Futures Child Development Center. Adherence to these guidelines will help ensure a secure environment for everyone involved.

QUESTIONS/CONCERNS

If you have a question or concern, do not hesitate to bring it to the attention of the teacher most directly involved. If the concern is not resolved, the Director. If not resolved, the OWNER can be reached at smarshall@bfCenter.com. The Director is available to assist parents and staff in resolving concerns.

POLICY CHANGES

The Center reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to change any policies through written communication with families. The Center utilizes e-mail as the prime form of communication. It is the parents' responsibility to ensure we have an up-to-date e-mail address on file at all times.